

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2002

INFO USDOC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

UNCLAS MOSCOW 13141

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP UR

SUBJECT: FIRE AT PAVILION 4 OF POLYMERY 74 EXHIBITION SITE

USDOC FOR BEWT/MATHES BIC/OIM COSIMI/THOMAS/RVNO FROM VITOUS

VIENNA FOR EWTC

LONDON FOR PANTOS OF COMMERCE

1. SUMMARY:-

MAJOR FIRE BROKE OUT AT SOKOLNIKI EXHIBIT CENTER AND DESTROYED PAVILION NO. 4 WHICH HOUSED FRENCH, CZECH, EAST GERMAN AND WEST GERMAN EXHIBITS. U.S. PAVILION NUMBER 2 UNTOUCHED BY FIRE. NO INJURIES REPORTED BY SOVIET AUTHORITIES. LIMITED AMOUNT OF US EXHIBIT SUPPLIES REPEAT SUPPLIES BEING STORED IN PAVILION 4 DESTROYED, INCLUDING ENTIRE HOSPITALITY SUPPLIES. FOUR U.S. FIRMS EXHIBITING INDEPENDENTLY ALSO HAD EXHIBITS DESTROYED. END SUMMARY.

2. AT ABOUT 4 P.M. LOCAL TIME A MAJOR FIRE BROKE OUT AT THE POLYMERY EXHIBIT CENTER IN SOKOLNIKI PARK IN MOSCOW AND DESTROYED AT LEAST 50 PERCENT OF PAVILION NUMBER 4, WITH REMAINING EQUIPMENT SMOKE -DAMAGED BEYOND USE. PAVILION 4 HOUSED UNCLASSIFIED

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ENTIRE FRENCH, CZECH AND EAST GERMAN EXHIBITS, AS WELL AS A

SMALL PORTION OF THE WEST GERMAN EXHIBIT. EXACT CAUSE NOT YET DETERMINED, BUT ONE REPORT POINTS TO ACETYLENE WHICH WAS STORED NEAR FRENCH EXHIBIT AREA.

3. ALTHOUGH U.S. EXHIBIT HOUSED IN PAVILION NUMBER 2. WAS UNAFFECTED BY FIRE, LIMITED AMOUNT OF US EXHIBIT SUPPLIES STORED IN PAVILION 4 WAS DESTROYED. HOSPITALITY SUPPLIES (PLASTIC DISHES, COKE, LIQUOR, WINE ETC) COMPLETELY DESTROYED. (DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF U.S. EXHIBIT SUPPLIES DESTROYED WILL BE REPORTED SUBSEQUENTLY).

4. FOUR U.S. COMPANIES PARTICIPATING INDEPENDENTLY IN POLYMERY: DOW CHEMICAL (NOT REPEAT NOT DOW CORNING), MONSANTO, WELT INTERNATIONAL (REPRESENTING BORDEN AND FREKOTE) AND SATRA CORP (REPRESENTING MEASURE EX) HAD EXHIBITS IN PAVILION 4 WHICH WERE COMPLETELY DESTROYED. THERE WERE NO REPEAT NO U.S. PERSONNEL WORKING AT THESE EXHIBITS THAT WE HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF, AND THEIR AUSTRIAN CONTRACTORS MANAGED TO GET OUT WITHOUT INJURY ACCORDING TO SOVIET FAIR OFFICIALS.

5. SOVIET EXHIBIT OFFICIALS HAVE NOT OFFICIALLY CONFIRMED THAT THERE ARE NO INJURIES, BUT WE HAVE SEVERAL REPORTS FROM THE SITE THAT IN FACT NO ONE WAS HURT. WE WILL PURSUE THIS QUESTION TO BE 100PERCENT SURE.

6. CHRISTOPHER WREN OF NY TIMES, ASSOCIATED PRESS AND PERHAPS OTHER CORRESPONDENTS, FILING STORY ON FIRE. STOESSEL

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